

Because they were just British children, you must not be too kind to them.

The caregivers at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School at Cowichan Station, south of Duncan on Vancouver Island, believed that the British child migrants children were different from Canadian children and felt that they must be shouted at and disciplined firmly, and that you must not be too kind to them. (1944 Report at this farm school by Isobel Harvey: BC Superintendent of Child Welfare)

In this Isobel Harvey report is another disturbing statement: “When this and the homosexual activities which have so alarmed others were discussed with him [the principal, Mr. Logan], he stated that the British people are over-sexed.”

The British people are over-sexed?

EX-GRATIA PAYMENT SCHEME FOR FORMER BRITISH CHILD MIGRANTS

The British government has offered *Ex-Gratia Payment Scheme* for former British Child Migrants as a result of the March 1, 2018 Report from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, (<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/>) based in the UK. The Inquiry looked at the Child Migration Programmes with regard to children placed outside of the UK. (<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/reports>)

Many former child migrants/home children and their families see this as *too little too late*.

The majority of the 120,000 child migrants sent to Canada have passed on. To be able to apply for this ex-gratia payment scheme, the former child migrant/home child had to be alive on March 1, 2018, when the report was released.

“Each eligible former child migrant will receive a payment of GBP £20,000.”

WHY this date and why this study, when there is every indication from earlier studies that British Child Migration was a flawed system? Opposition followed the 350-year history of British Child migration – but it was rarely heeded. When the scheme appeared illegal, the British government made it legal – such as what was done right from the start:

1618: January: King James I gave his approval to send children to the colonies. This is seen as the start of British child migration to the colonies.

- 1619:** The Virginia Company accepted 100 children from London to supply labour to the plantation owners at Jamestown, Virginia.
- 1620:** January: opposition to child migration was voiced with claims that the first group was sent illegally.
- 1620:** The 'legal' beginning of child migration was in 1620 when the British Government's Privy Council sanctioned the despatch of 'recalcitrant' children.
- 1869:** This is the date when British child migration to Canada took hold. Opposition followed but was never heeded. In 1869, George Cruikshank voiced his opposition to British child migration and became involved in the movement to protect children. (attached)
- 1875:** The Doyle Report. In 1874, Andrew Doyle was commissioned to report on the schemes for emigration of workhouse children to Canada, in particular the schemes operated by Maria Rye and Annie MacPherson. Doyle spent six months in Canada, and while there he met with 400 children. Following his critical report, the Local Government Board stopped the emigration of children from workhouses in March 1875. "Some of the places indeed, are worse than a Board of Guardians would consent to place a child in England." (Page 14) He criticized that the children were presented in Canada as objects of pity, "...it would surely be better to keep them at home, letting them take their chance of what Guardians can do for them amongst their own people." (Page 21)
- 1924:** The Bondfield Report: spring of 1924, the British Overseas Settlement Department was asked to look into how the system of child migration was functioning in Canada. Margaret Bondfield was appointed as the head of the delegation. The November 1924 report found that the system met their approval, but recommended that no children should be transported until they had reached the age of fourteen, the school leaving age in Britain, as the children sent to Canada were mainly sent to work. They reported that younger children could also be vulnerable to abuse. As a result, the British government announced that it would no longer offer financial assistance for immigrants to Canada if they were under the age of fourteen. The Canadian government supported the decision and enacted regulations in April 1925 banning the entry of children under fourteen and unaccompanied by their parents or guardians. This ban was set in place for a three-year period. In 1928 the ban on unaccompanied children under the age of 14 was made permanent.
- 1926:** In spite of the 1925 ban, as many as 4,000 children sailed to Canada, but numbers declined by the end of the decade.
- 1926:** Sir Joseph Cook, High Commissioner for Australia was "...glad of the encouragement the Prince [of Wales] had given them in their efforts to people the outlying Dominions with British stock."

1934: The Prince of Wales, later King Edward VIII, spearheaded a fundraising campaign at the Grocer's Hall in London to raise £100,000 to launch further Fairbridge Farm Schools along the lines of the Farm School established by Kingsley Fairbridge near Pinjarra, in Western Australia in 1912. The Prince of Wales showed his support with a donation of £1,000 of his own money and announced, as Kingsley Fairbridge said years earlier, that "...this is not a charity; it is an Imperial investment."

1935: In spite of the 1928 Canadian government ban, the Fairbridge Society was allowed to open a farm school south of Duncan on Vancouver Island, BC. Between 1935 and 1948, 329 children were sent to this farm school. There were several four, five and six year old children, with the majority being between eight and twelve years old. Over 95% were not orphans.

The Canadian Department of Immigration and Colonization was heavily involved in the choosing of the children for inclusion at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School – in a 1935 letter, the children were referred to as "material" and their entry into Canada was discussed in terms of brokers, wholesalers and retailers. (attached)

1944: Isobel Harvey Report on the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School exposes sexual, physical and verbal abuse at the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School. Another five parties of children arrived between 1945 and 1948.

1956: In 1956 the UK Home Office's John Ross led a fact-finding committee to investigate Australian child migrant institutions, and found unfavourable conditions and poorly-trained staff in the 26 institutions it visited. The Home Office sought to blacklist the Fairbridge Farm Schools at Pinjarra and Molong, but conceded this was **politically impossible due to the royal patronage of the Fairbridge Society**. The Ross Committee's findings were ignored and they continued to send vulnerable children to blacklisted institutions. (Up until the 1970s with these Fairbridge Farm Schools open until the early 1980s.)

1998: ...review of the welfare of former British child migrants conducted by the House of Commons Select Committee on Health, have recognised that child migrants were frequently subjected to harsh conditions, physical abuse and sexual abuse prior to their migration, during their journey and at the institutions to which they were sent. The UK government has previously acknowledged that children were mistreated in the child migration programmes.

2010: February 24, Britain's Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, gave a Formal Apology to all British Child Migrants sent to the colonies over the 350-year period of child migration. Brown's Apology included evidence that the government had knowledge of the harsh conditions and abuse that the children faced once they arrived in their new country.

2015: June. Former children from the Molong Fairbridge Farm School, which was located about 300km east of Sidney, New South Wales, Australia, won "... a \$24

million provisional settlement to compensate child residents of Fairbridge Farm who were subjected to physical, sexual and emotional abuse brings to a conclusion an emotional six-year struggle in the courts in NSW.”

2017-2018: Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse.

2019: British government Ex-Gratia Payment Scheme for Former British Child Migrants comes too late for many of the 120,000 British child migrants deported to Canada, where the majority were used as slave labour, and in the case of the Prince of Wales Fairbridge Farm School, the children received training to prepare them for life as farm labourers and domestic servants.

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Marjorie Too Afraid To Cry. A Home Child Experience (January 2012)

Marjorie Her War Years. A British Home Child in Canada. (August 2018)

March 2, 2019